Book 1: Kentucky school for the blind
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Teaching the Blind to See
Most of the Students Come From the Mountains of Eastern Kentucky, Where Trachoma Is Most Prevalent—Miss Merwin Prefers That Her Pupils Be Sent Her In Extreme Youth, Then Most Can Be Accomplished With Them.

Teaching the blind to see seems not to be true yet the Institute for the Education of the Blind, the school that everyone in Louisville knows but few understand, is doing that apparently impossible thing. In the mind of the average citizen the institution serves only to ease a little the hard future of the unfortunate child who comes to the world denied its sight. Instead the big school is teaching its students to see through their finger tips almost as effectively as with a good pair of eyes.

Miss Susan Merwin, the new superintendent, points to Miss Gladys King, of Brooksville. as a fine example of one of the students who has been taught to "see." She maintains that no one who can't see could write such a poem as "On An Oak Leaf," the composition of Miss King:

It fluttered down into my listless hand;
'Tis but a leaf, yet as I gaze thereon,
The veil of Nature, modestly withdrawn,
Reveals the wonder which her skill has planned.
I see the blended tint, and mingling shade
Dissolve into the pure and tender green;
Its faultless outline, softly marked between
With tracery which mortal never made.
Ah, then, if Nature from the lowly earth
Can shape and mold this perfect work of art,
What hope have I to make a thing that's fair,
Since that, the best to which my thoughts give birth,
The highest effort of both brain and heart
With this small leaf, alas, cloth not compare?

Miss King was one of the institution's brightest students and will pursue her studies further this year at the University of Louisville.

Graduates of the Kentucky Institution For the Education of the Blind Are Going Out Into the World and Doing An Adult's Part—One Is An "Inspector" For the Louisville Health Department—Another a Successful Real Estate Dealer—-Poetry of Merit Written By Another —- Something of An Institution Here That Is Little Understood.

Go Out Into World

Many of those who have been graduated from the Kentucky Institute for the Blind are now instructors in similar institutions throughout the country. Others are engaged in various lines of business, several owning piano houses. One man who was graduated from the local school several years ago is now a wealthy real estate dealer in another State, Miss Merwin said, and recently paid a visit to some of his old teachers in Louisville.

'This may sound odd to you," Miss Merwin said the other day, "but one of the former pupils here is now employed by the city as dump inspector. He is not totally blind, and I I do not think that he really has much 'inspecting' to do, his duties consisting chiefly in visiting various dumps and sprinkling them with a disinfectant."

Even those connected with other official institutions of Louisville seem to understand vaguely the mission of the institution. "I received a telephone call from the city hospital the other day," Miss Merwin said, "inquiring whether we would receive an old lady who had lost her sight. On another occasion not so very long ago an old man was led to the door of the institution, and the person with him asked whether he could be cared for by us. In both cases I had to explain that the institution was not of that nature, but that it was a school for blind boys and girls of the State."

No person Over 18 years of age is admitted to the institution, but a pupil is permitted to remain there until he or she is 21 years of age.

Best When Young

"We like it best when they reach us at the age of 6 or 7 years," Miss MerwIn said. "Then they are in the plastic state and we can usually mold them to our liking. Their minds seem to grasp things more readily, too, when pupils reach us at an early age. The full course at the institution is usually completed in twelve years."

Miss Merwin said that although there is no tuition charge at the institution, and in cases where the parents or guardians are not able to pay railroad fare it is paid out of the appropriation for the school, the institution is not looked upon as a charitable one.

"We who are here associated in the work look upon the institute the same as we do the public schools," said Miss Merwin. " and why shouldn't we?" The two are conducted on the same principle, the only difference being that one is for the blind and the other is for children who can see. There are many children attending public school who could not do so were a tuition charged."

Housed At the School

One difference between the Kentucky Institute for the Blind and the public school, however, is that pupils at the former institution are housed, fed and provided with books and clothing free of charge. The books in use at the institution are very expensive and beyond the reach of most parents who send their children to it.

Probably because of the prevalence of trachoma, a disease of the eye, in the mountains, a majority of the blind boys and girls attending the institute are from that section of Kentucky.

Mr. Huntoon's Invention

Geography at the institute is taught by means of maps carved from wood by Mr. Huntoon, former superintendent. They are both solid and dissected to the number of several hundred, and were invented by Mr. Huntoon. The blind boy or girl, through the sense of touch by running his fingers over the raised surfaces and depressions, can designate the mountains, streams, plateaus and the course of railroads. The map of Kentucky, made by Mr. Huntoon before McCreary county was created by the last General Assembly, is in 119 sections, each section representing a county. By lifting out a section and running his fingers over and about it a blind boy sets in his mind a perfect outline of a county. There was one youth at the institution last year who could take the sectional map of frequency—a, n, s, o, m, d, r, l--occupy space of two points on the full half domino. The Kentucky Institute for the Blind is equipped with a library of 2,000 volumes. These are neatly bound and are arranged on shelves the same as in other libraries. For the most part the books are printed in the New York point system, but some are printed In the Braille system, both systems of printing being used in the plant of the American Printing House for the Blind. Included in the library is the Bible, in ten volumes, one volume being about the size of the old style family Bible, giving one an idea of the difference in size between printing for the blind, and that for those who can see. Aside from the 2,000 volumes in the library at the institute, it has a circulating library of several hundred volumes. These books go into the homes of the blind in the mountains of Kentucky and elsewhere in the State.

Some Innovations

Several innovations are to be introduced into the course of study at the Kentucky Institute for the Blind at the beginning of the coming school term, among them domestic science. A range has been put in place in the department, set aside for this study and the blind girls will be taught to cook as well as sew and do fancy work. Another departure has to do with the presentation of a loom to the institution by B. C. Ballard Thruston, on which the blind girls will be taught to weave rugs, etc. The loom was made In the workshop at Berea College. Under the supervision of Clifford B. Martin a workshop for the adult blind is to be operated at the institution this year. He operated it during three months of the last school year as an experiment, and during that time three men employed in the shop made 3,000 brooms. .The men will be paid for their services out of the revenue derived from the sale of mops, brooms, etc., made by them, and they will give instruction to the youths of the institution who desire to learn how to make various articles.

Sources of Livelihood

According to Miss Merwln, piano tuning, taught in the school, is one of the chief sources of livelihood adopted by the blind after leaving the institution. While in the school they are so instructed that they can take a piano apart and put it together again, in that way becoming familiar with every detail in the manufacture of the instrument. There is a miniature piano at the

school that was made by blind pupils. Mr. Martin, instructor in piano tuning, is totally blind.

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Louisville Times April 3, 1915

ENLARGED FIELD IS IN PROSPECT

Education and Employment of the Blind Requires Financial Aid At Present.

Enlargement of the scope of the work of education of the adult blind of Louisville is becoming more and more urgent and for this purpose those interested in this important benevolence are seeking funds with which it may be carried on until State aid can be obtained. According to the United States Census there are about 5,000 blind adults in Kentucky, of which more than 150 are in Loulsyille. While remarkably efficient work is being done by the Kentucky Institution for the Education of the blind, under the law it can receive only those between six and sixteen years old.

Under the direction of Clifford Martin, of the teaching staff of the institution, a workshop where employment is given to the adult blind is being maintained by private subscription at 2211, Frankfort Avenue. The hand-made mops turned out by this shop have found a ready market and broom machinery has been installed and basketry, willow-work and piano tuning are to be added. A field worker to investigate conditions throughout the city and to teach reading and useful occupations in the homes is sorely needed. Any amount will be gratefully received and applied directly to the immediate relief of those for whom it is intended.

Louisville Herald April 20 1917

URGES TRAINING FOR ADULT BLIND

Miss Merwin In Address To Rotarians Appeals For State Aid.

Education for the adult blind of Louisville and the State of Kentucky was strongly advocated by the Louisville Rotary Club at the regular weekly luncheon meeting yesterday in the Hotel Henry Watterson. The fact that the State cares for and gives training to blind boys and girls from 6 to 18 years of age was brought out by the speakers, Miss Susan Merwin, superintendent of the Kentucky Institute for the Blind. and Gen ,Bennett H. Young, president of the Board of Directors, but no attention whatever is bestowed upon helpless men and women who, under the handicap of blindness, must go thru a severe trial each day in earning a livelihood. • The institute here, Miss Merwin said, notwithstanding the fact that it is limited In Its expenditures, has rented a small cottage at a charge of $9 a month and in this little shack blind men and women are being taught how to make rugs, chairs, baskets, brooms and all sorts of useful household articles.

Asks Public Patronage.

If the public would buy the output of this little cottage she said it would be a great help toward supporting the workers. Jailer Charles C. Foster was

mentioned by Miss Merwin as one of the most loyal supporters of the little cottage in the city. His purchases have contributed largely to the income to keep the little home going. In the State of Ohio, Miss Merwin said, 160,000 is appropriated annually for the care and education of blind adults. A large sum is also used for this same purpose In the City of Baltimore.
Miss Merwin suggested that the Kentucky Legislature make an appropriation of about $50,000 to establish a vocational school for blind adults. The Rotary Club took no action on the suggestion but arrangements will be made for a special meeting on the subject later and at this conference a movement may be launched. Gen. Young's speech was devoted largely to the splendid work that is being done by the Kentucky Institute for the Blind for the younger element.

Rotary To Participate.

The Rotarians voted unanimously to participate in the Flag Day exercises In Central Park, June 14. Al Vogel, W. R. R. Lavielle and George Kopmeier, were appointed to make the arrangements.
The concert to be given by Miss Margaret Wilson, daughter of President Woodrow Wilson, in Louisville for the benefit of the Red Cross was unanimously indorsed, and all Rotarians were asked to work for the success of the event. It was suggested that an effort be made to have Miss Wilson sing in B. F. Keith's Theater instead of the Jefferson County Armory. Al Vogel presented the club with a beautiful silk American flag; the same banner that was carried by the organization in the Booster parade celebrating the opening of the baseball season last week.
The bowling team of the club will be entered in the International Rotary Bowling Tournament to be held in every city of the United States May 16. The teams in this contest will play their games in their home cities and the scores w.11 be telegraphed to New York. The championship will go to the team with the highest score. Many handsome trophies will go to the winners. The Louisville team will consist of J. M. Vollmer, R. L. Hawes, Fred Schmitt, A. T. Benson, Fred J. Drexler, captain, and S. A. Campbell, substitute. James T. Short. the Rev. David Cady Wright and Albert W. Clegg were elected members of the organization. Vice-President George Hayes called the meeting to order and introduced Dr. Gaylord Hall who presided.

Louisville Courier-Journal May 17, 1917

GIRLS OF BLIND SCHOOL STAGE OUTDOOR DANCES,
Forty-two Participated In Entertainment, Wearing Costumes Made By Themselves.

Girls of the Kentucky School for the Blind staged their annual outdoor entertainment, consisting of folk and flower dances, on the east lawn of the school grounds on Frankfort Avenue yesterday afternoon before an appreciative audience of 500 persons. Interest In the attractive costumes worn by the girls was increased because of the,- fact that each of the dancers had made her own clothing. Forty-two girls took part in the entertainment, which began at 3 o'clock. The dances were staged under

direction of Miss M. Blyeallan, a teacher of the school, and the boys of the negro department of the blind school furnished the music. Patriotic airs, played during the time the girls were not "behind the footlights." added a patriotic note to the celebration. The audience was seated on chairs on the lawn when the girls opened the programme by parading upon the stage of the natural amphitheater. "The Muffin Man" was the title of the first dance, done by fifteen of the smaller girls. Eight girls, dressed as French dolls, next gave dances, after which the larger girls staged a dance specialty, "A Mazurka." The second part of the programme opened with "A Flower Fancy," in which all of the girls took part. Miss Tressie Pace had the role of "Mother Nature," and other girls were dressed to represent fairies and the spirits of roses, violets, poppies, daisies and lillies. Appropriate verse was spoken during pauses in the dance. All of the girls took part In the "Portland Fancy." the last dance on the programme. The blind school was thrown open to the inspection of the visitors immediately after the programme was concluded. The closing exercises of the school will be held during the first week In June. The Shakespeare class will present "Twelfth Night" on the lawn of the school grounds on the afternoon of June 5 and other special features have been arranged for the closing week.

Louisville Times May 10, 1917

ANNIVERSARY OF SCHOOL OF BLIND

Citizens Laud Those Who Have Labored For Institution's Uplift.

Prominent citizens of the city took part in the celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Kentucky School for the Blind yesterday afternoon. Gen. Bennett H. Young paid a beautiful tribute to Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Huntoon, whose untiring efforts had placed the institution on the high plane it now occupies. That there had been no graft in the seventy-two years of its existence and that no word of suspicion about the management had ever been uttered were the points emphasized by the speaker. Miss Julia Purnell, who came to the school in 1851 as a student, and who has been a member of the faculty since 1871, related to the audience many of the pleasant reminiscences that hearkened back to the days of the origin of the school. Gen. W. B. Haldeman eloquently praised Theodore S. Bell, who gave so much of his life in the furtherance of this great philanthropic work. He spoke of him when he conducted a column in the Courier-Journal, and answering questionaires tor the people throughout the entire South. Gen. Haldeman read a tribute written by Susan Merwin, the present superintendent to Mr. and Mrs. Huntoon, praising them for their unceasing activities throughout their long service in an endeavor to raise the standing of the school. After reading the tribute Gen. Haldeman said that he thought that a copy of this should not only be placed on file, but that it should be "engraved on the hearts of all." W. C. Kendrick spoke of the changes that had come to pass and of the progress that had been made by the institution. He expressed the wish that the home would always be able to have those at its head prominent in the business and professional world. Tributes were paid to Dr.

T. S. Bell. Judge William Bullock and Bryce Patton, the first superintendent of the home. Miss Merwin read from old records of the Kentucky School for the Blind and praised those who had served the school for the last twenty years, mentioning the gardener, houseman and cook who were still there. The chapel was draped with large American flags; and the children rendered several patriotic songs. Little Eva Jane Ellis' read a poem entitled. "The Clock of Time," written by an old pupil in 1869. The Rev. E. L. Warren pronounced the invocation and benediction.

Louisville Courier-Journal, May 10, 1917

Seventy-fifth Anniversary of School For Blind Celebrated Prominent Speakers Praise Philanthropic Work of Institution.

Stirring addresses were made by a number of prominent Louisville men yesterday afternoon at the seventy-fifth anniversary celebration of the Kentucky School for the Blind. Gen. Bennett H. Young, who has for the last fifteen years served as president of the board, made the address of the afternoon. He said that the Institution was one of eight in the country and that the school ranks second to none. Gen. Young paid high tribute to Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Huntoon, formerly at the head of the school, most of whose lifetime was devoted to the undertaking of the great philanthropic work. “That there has been no touch of graft in seventy-five years, and that the highest motives have backed this work, and no word of suspicion about the management has been uttered is indeed an ideal record, and one of which we justly can feel proud,” said he.

The audience was taken back to the early days of the institution by Miss Julia Purnell. Miss Purnell became identified with the school in 1859 and remained there until she was offered a position by Theodore Bell, and has been a member of the faculty ever since. "I am never so happy as when I am teaching a little blind child lessons on the piano," concluded Miss Purnell.

Gen. W. B. Haldeman eloquently praised Theodore S. Bell, who gave forty-three years of his life to the furtherance of the work of the school. He recalled that the first superintendent of the school conducted a column in the Courier-Journal, answering queries of persons throughout the South. Gen. Haldeman read the tribute to Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Huntoon, written by Susan Merwin, the present superintendent, in which was recited the unceasing activities of Mr. and Mrs. Huntoon to place the school on the high plane it now occupies.

After reading the paper Gen. Haldeman said he thought that a copy of this should not only be filed with the annual reports, but that it should be "engravened on the hearts of all."

W. C. Kendrick, in paying tribute to those of the past who had so graciously given of their services, said “No brighter stars in the professional world, in the business world or in the commercial world, ever existed, than those who had placed the institution on its foundation," and expressed the hope that it always would be continued. Mr. Kendrick spoke of the changes that had

been brought about and the progress made. He spoke of Dr. T. S. Bell, and Judge William Bullock, who for many years served as presiding officer. Miss Merwin gave readings from old records of the Kentucky School for the Blind, and little Eva Jane Ellis, a pupil of the school, read a poem entitled. "The Clock of Time," which was composed by a pupil in 1859. Patriotic decorations and the singing of several national airs gave a martial spirit to the occasion. The Rev. E. L. Warren pronounced the invocation and the benediction.

Louisville Times May 8,1917

FOUNDING DAY

Seventy-fifth Anniversary of Blind Institute Will Be Celebrated Tomorrow.

Celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Kentucky Institute for the Blind will begin tomorrow afternoon at 4 o'clock. Folk and flower dances will be given at 3 o'clock Thursday afternoon and the annual track and field meet will be held at 2:30 Saturday afternoon. The programme for tomorrow follows:

Song—All Hail the Power of Jesus Name. :
Invocation.
Song—America.
Reading from old records concerning establishment and growth of Kentucky School for the Blind.
The Clock of Time—Poem composed by a pupil in 1859.
Song—Lead, Kindly Light.
Address—Gen. Bennett H. Young, president.
Song—Old Kentucky Home.
Remarks—T. L. Jefferson, W. C. Kendrick, Gen W. B. Haldeman.
Song—Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean.
Reminiscence—Miss Julia Purnell.
Song—Star-Spangled Banner.

Commencement exercises will begin at 3 o'clock June 5, when “Twelfth Night" will be given on the lawn of the institution. Gaul's oratorio, "The Holy City," will be given the afternoon of June 10, and the following day the closing concert will be given.

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Louisville Times Sep 29, 1919

SCHOOL FOR BLIND TO HELP WOMEN AS WELL AS MEN

Instruction in Plain Sewing Will be Given First—Plan Is Successful.

MEN MAKE MANY BROOMS

The Kentucky School for Blind today announced the opening of a department for women in connection with the Work shop for Adults which has hitherto instructed men only. The shop has been in existence for about five years. Until two years ago it struggled along the best it could with the

aid of C. B. Martin. a member of the faculty. Then the state made an appropriation for its maintenance. So successful has been the broom and mop-making that a plea came from over the State that women be given an opportunity to learn to be self-supporting. At the beginning the simplest kind of instruction is planned, principally the teaching of plain sewing, such as hemming, then crocheting and tatting will follow and other types of advanced sewing.

Plan is Announced.

This is the way the plan is carried out. A report comes to the school that a woman in the city or county wants aid. Miss Florence Lewis, field worker, is sent to investigate the case. If possible she teaches the work in the home, for according to Miss Susan B. Merwin, superintendent of the school, it is preferable to have a blind woman remain in her customary surroundings, rather than transplant her to a strange environment. If it is thought best to bring the applicant to the school, lodgings are found and paid for until she becomes self-supporting.

Already results have come from this new department. Miss Lydia Taylor, of Munfordville, has sent a number of aprons which have been sold at the shop. Other cases have been reported for investigation, including- that of a former school teacher from Newport, who is in need of financial aid and begs for help. A colored woman from Shelbyville has also made application for help.

The shop is situated on Frankfort Avenue, a few blocks from the school. The work of the women will be exhibited in the display room with that of the men. The customers are individuals and retail and wholesale commercial houses.

Makes 138 Brooms Daily.

A visit through the shop is instructive. Here blind men prepare and make brooms and mops. One young man by the name of John Grines, is so skillful with his hand that he turns out between 130 and 138 brooms daily. Another, who is not a fast worker, makes sixty-eight mops daily. Isaac Randals, the old man who for years played the violin in front of the post-office, is sewing brooms.

Although the women's department is in its incipiency, great results are expected by officials of the school. Dr. I. Lederman has been elected by the board of visitors of the Kentucky School for the Blind at the Septermber meeting to fill the position of oculist for the school, which has been vacant since the death of the late Dr. William Cheatham, who for thirty-five years served in such a capacity.

Dr. Lederman Assumes Duties.

Dr. Lederman has assumed his new duties. A thorough test of each pupils eyes will be made and an accurate record of cases kept. Every possible effort to improve conditions will be made by Dr. Lederman. The children will be sent to him for treatment and he will make periodical visits the school, The school has nineteen new pupils, this year, the total enrollment being, 104.

Louisville Herald September 20, 1919

BLIND WOMEN WILL BE TAUGHT TO SEW

Kentucky School Adds New Department; Dr. Lederman To Fill Vacancy.

So successful has been broom and mop making for men at the Kentucky School for the Blind that a plea came from over the state that women would be given an opportunity to learn to be self-supporting.

In answer to this plea the announcement was made yesterday of the opening of a department for women in connection with the workshop for adults which has hitherto provided positions for men only.

The simplest kind of Instruction is planned at the beginning, principally the teaching of plain sewing, such as hemming, then crocheting and tatting, to be followed by types of advanced sewing.

The board of visitors at the September meeting elected Dr. I. Lederman to fill the position of oculist for the school, which has been vacant since the death of the late Dr. William Cheatham.

New pupils received this year number nineteen, making the total enrollment to date 104.

Louisville Times Oct. 8, 1920

Printing School For Blind Praised

Method of printing and the press of the American Printing Shop for the Blind, on Frankfort Avenue, received praise from Walter G. Holmes, New York editor of the only current magazine for the blind in America. who was in Louisville two weeks ago visiting the Kentucky School for the Blind.

So pleased was Mr. Holmes with the shop that he sent his head pressman., who is now in the city, to study its methods. Mr. Holmes hopes to have a press for his concern copied from the one at the shop, which was made in 1880 and was the first rotary press for embossed printing In the country.

He said that he was sure the National Institute for the Blind in England would also like to have a similar press.

Louisville Times January 5, 1921

LOCAL PROJECTS MAY GET $53,600

Federal Bill Allows $40,000 For Printing House For Blind; $10,000 For U. S. Hospital.

More than $50,000 in appropriations for Louisville projects are included In the Sundry Civil Bill passed by the House of Representatives, according to a dispatch last night from The Times Washington Bureau.

If the bill is passed by the Senate without change $40.000 will go to the American Printing House for the Blind, $10,000 to the United States Marine Hospital and the annual salary total of $3.600 for the United States Fisheries Station.

Maj. L. H. Redman, head of the Marine Hospital, last night said he had hoped for an appropriation of $20,000, but that half that amount "would

help a great deal." The money would be used, he said, to have new boilers installed and smoke stacks and elevators repaired. The appropriation is greatly needed, Major Redman said. The Item of $40,000 for the American Printing House for the Blind would be the largest ever received by that institution, $10.000 being the annual appropriation heretofore. . It is understood that the proposed increase is due principally to the efforts of Miss Susan B. Merwin, superintendent.
The money would be used for the upkeep and enlargement of the Printing shop and to cover the expense of sending books to every blind school in the country, the chief work of the printing house. The proposed appropriation for the Fisheries Station will cover the salaries of Charles W. Burnham, superintendent, and three assistants for 1921, Mr. Burnham's salary Is $1,500 a year.

Courier-Journal, January 23, 1921
How Books and Work Bring the World to the Blind
By J. A. DIXON.
To be born blind! This is the greatest misfortune that some persons can conceive of. Or even to become blind after having tasted the pleasures of vision. But persons who talk in this manner are always persons who are in the full possession of their faculties, and fully aware of the beauties of light, color, shape and line. They often say, "I would rather lose any other sense than my sight. Why, I would never be able to read my favorite books, and could hear them read only by someone who might not want to sacrifice themselves to my pleasure." But if you asked any one of the children at the Kentucky School for the Blind, at 1867 Franklin Avenue, you would get a far different answer, for they would tell you that they do not miss any of the things bemoaned by those who do not know that the treasures of reading are open to the blind quite as much as they are to a person of normal sight. At the American Printing House for the Blind, run in co-operation with the school, books are printed that afford to the boys and girls of the school, and to the blind throughout the world, all the pleasure that books may give. But due to the large size of the volume and to the greater expense In printing these cumbersome books, the list of those that are embossed on the press of the printing house is very carefully selected by a library committee appointed by the convention of superintendents of schools for the blind throughout the world. In the United States alone there are about sixty of these schools, nearly all of which draw their libraries , from the list of books printed in Louisville. A glance over this list is very instructive. The first thing that one would think of missing if blind are the beauties of nature. There are sunsets and dawns, gorgeous beyond description; there are sun-drenched, summer noons, when shadows pave with sliding mosaic the floor of our visible world; trees, grass and blue sky, and hurrying or lazy clouds. These, we think, a blind person misses.
But that is only partially true. Through the books with which they are provided they can study nature with Aggassiz, Huxley, Thoreau and the

host of writers of nature primers for the little folks. Through the eyes of these trained observers they are aware of many things in nature which those who do not read never know exist. If these children happen to be born blind, and never know what the green of grass, the blue of sky is like, they say that they do know that both are very beautiful, very kind and gentle, and they can share in the subtle ecstasy of nature, kinship which thrilled those fortunate men and women who wrote about it so engagingly. They are happy in knowing that these things exist and are beautiful, and they are content to be able to know this much.

After nature, which obtrudes itself into the lives of every normal child, come the race-old nature myths and interpretations, as told now by the classic tales of Aesop, of Anderson, of Grimm, and interpreters from the Greek and Norse tongues, and now by such moderns as Rudyard Kipling in his Jungle Books, as Charles Kingsley in The Water Babies, and Madam How and Lady Why. Through these they learn some of the poetry that is in the mere face of nature, and the deeper meanings that may lie hidden from seeing eyes.

As they grow older, they follow the same lines of development as any normal child. They learn the romance of history, in Scott's Ivanhoe, Quentin Durward, Lady of the Lake and Marmion, in Thackeray's tale of Henry Esmond and the Young Pre tender; in Dicken's thrilling story of the bloody French Revolution, with its ever deeping refrain, "I am the resurrection and the life! Even though a man die, yet shall he live." Homer and Virgil tell them long tales of voyages, fights and adventures and romances in long ago and, strange lands. With the good Harounal Raschid they may wander the streets of Bagdad and hear the endlessly involved tales of Arabic and Persian story tellers of the streets. Through their Latin classics they may hear again the thunder of Cicero in the Roman Senate, when he denounced the powerful Cataline after he had cowed the patricians of that august body. Or with Caesar they may fight the six campaigns in Gaul that were responsible for the founding of Roman civilization in France. In French there is the tender tale of the good Abbe Constantin, the witty comedy of Moliere and the immortal romance of the famous d'Artagnan, Athos, Porthos and Aramis, and their struggles against the powerful Cardinal Richeleu. In German they have Goethe's pastoral Hermann and Dorothea, and William Tell's fight for the liberty of his native land, as dramatized by Schiller. Of history they have Irving's graceful Spanish stories, Macaulay's trumpet and drum glimpses into the lives of famous writers, generals and statesmen. With John Richard Green they may trace the heroic story of ' the development of the English people, from a small point in a small island to the greatest naval, comercial and colonizing nation in the reach of time, and now one of the dominating forces of the modern world. Prescott will tell them his prismatic tales of the conquest of the .powerful empires of Montezuma and the Incas by a hundred of Spanish , and Portuguese rogues, of the famous' canals, all bridges of which had bean retreat through a great city of wrecked, of the 200 adventurers who had dared to sit on the throne of the lord of Mexico and who later ruled

the vanishing people with an iron hand; of the reckless capture of the Inca of Peru in the midst of his court and his army of thousands. Parkman will unfold the roll of history in the Northern Hemisphere, when Frenchman and Indian met Englishman and American for the possession of North America, and were defeated. All this they can know, through the pages of the big books, as clearly as anyone with perfect vision. And they do learn it, too, for the library books of the school are worn and dirty where hundreds of little hands have carefully followed line after line of the raised dots that serve them for letters. Miss Susan B. Merwin, superintendent, says that the children who are old enough to understand these books are eager to read them, and that there never is a time when every book is in its proper place on the shelves.

Miss Merwin says that through long practice the children become very expert in reading the systems of printing and writing and can follow the story through hundreds of pages, with the same ease and almost the same facility as one who is able to see the little black marks that are our letters. They sit with the index finger of each hand in the line, and skip from letter to letter with amazing speed, when it is considered that they must feel the height, position and arrangement of every one of the dots which crowd the page. So the children read of the beautiful things which they are unable to see and are quite as happy and many times happier than those who have many things to fret them but have sight. One may go through every hall and workroom of the big building, each one filled with the blind children at work or play, and everyone shows a smile. There is laughter and joking, and childish fun, just as there is in any kindergarten anywhere. The children make sandhouses, cunningly fashioning them with hands that can see almost as well as some persons eyes, of making toys from cardboard and paste and string, or molding figures of plastic clay.

In the school rooms they are as quiet and decorous as ordinary students, and recite their lessons quite as well, so their teachers say. as anyone can, They study geography from dissected maps made at the school, and can "bound" a country or State as correctly as any student who studied the map with the eye. Their physics lesson is as well prepared, and they listen with eager interest to lecturers on botany. zoology and physiology. In their hours outside of school they play games in the big rooms of the school building in cold or rainy weather. In good weather they venture out on the lawn and romp and play as noisily and happily as other children. In the evenings they study and talk among themselves, or read, sometimes to themselves, and sometimes aloud to the younger children. The favorites at this time are the favorites of other children.

The boys like Tom Brown's Schooldays, The Last of the Mohicans, Ben Hur, Lorna Doone, Hiawatha, Lays of Ancient Rome, especially the story of Horatius at the bridge, and Scott's prose and poetical tales. Girls prefer Little Women, Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare. Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch, the Idylls of the King. and a few of Shakespeare's comedies such as A Midsummer Night's Dream, As You Like It and The Tempest. For Sundays

there are the Four Evangels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and • John, with the Acts of the Apostles, and selections from other portions of Scripture. There is music, a large library of it, for those inclined, and their instructors say that they learn it as quickly as if they could see the notes, although they must read the notes with their hands, memorize them, learn the part for each hand separately and then put the two together to make a piece. But despite these difficulties, the repertoire of some of the advanced pupils of the school is astonishing and their execution of technically intricate pieces still more so. So, it can be easily seen that the blind persons and the blind children at the school are not misanthropic because they cannot see, but through their books, their music, their games, their school work and industrial training, really get as much happiness out of life as those who so greatly fear becoming blind, or recoil in aversion from the thought of being born in that condition. They are happy and these things help to keep them so. There Is as much gladness in their darkened lives as in others which are filled with sunshine. From the most discouraging prospect they draw comfort and good nature, and can give a lesson to many in how to be truly happy.

Louisville Courier Journal Dec. 18, 1921

BLIND CHILDREN TO STAGE PLAY

Spangled Costumes Made By Sightless Boys and Girls to Be Worn Friday

Costumes and psychology will make success of the Christmas entertainment to be given by children of the Kentucky School for the Blind at 10 o'clock Friday morning in the school's assembly room, Miss Susan B. Merwin, superintendent, said yesterday in announcing the Christmas week programme of the institution. Through the effect of real costumes with spangles, cotton and bells on them, she explained, the "children:will throw their entire beings into the performance of 'Sing a Song of Sleepyland.'"

In a cast of nineteen children, ranging from 7 to 14 years of age, sixteen are blind, Miss Merwin said, while the other three have but slight sight perception. Of an audience of approximately 120 children, which will "see" the play, more than three-fourths are blind.

Real Acting Promised.

"But no mistakes will be made," she said, "not once will a child forget its position in the various scenes, and real acting will be seen because the children helped to make their costumes.

"Because of the last fact the members of the cast know they are staging a real entertainment and know that they are taking parts in a real play. The audience, too, will, know how each one is dressed, because those in the play proudly have described their costumes and produced them to be 'seen' by the doubtful."

The entertainment will be open, to the public.

Some of those taking part are: Ballard Sizemore, Shelby Hart, Marshall Barks, Charles Tracy, Cecil Belcher, Seborn Wilhoit, Richard Frain, Josephine

Jackson, Elizabeth Schweer. .:Lula Mae Wash, Doro Schweer, Bessie Noble, Amy Fugate, Daisy Wallace, Helen Wallace, Valera Farmer and Willard Sloan.

Coached By Blind Instructor.

The play has been coached for two weeks by C. B. Martin, an instructor at the school, who is blind, and by Miss M. Blyeallen, an instructor. Mr. Martin spoke of the psychological effect the "real" costumes had on the children and how it necessarily would affect their portrayals of the various characters in the play.

"Because of the costumes," he said, "the children take the greatest of interest in the play and have been working enthusiastically. They cannot see the costumes or perceive the colors, but when they can feel the cot.ton and the tinsel on the costumes and are told that they are wearing a white cap and red blouse, they know that they are going to 'real' actors." During the afternoon the girls of the school will give an entertainment at Parr's Rest, and will present to the women in the home gifts which they have made in their industrial department.

Christmas Day the children will receive their presents at the home, and will take part in a religious cantata, "The Gift of Love," at 7 o'clock at night., The following day is designated officially as "toy day," during which the children at the home will become acquainted with the various Christmas presents. Tuesday and Wednesday following Christmas, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, entertainments will be given for the children and Thursday afternoon parties will be given for boys and for girls. Friday afternoon they will be taken on a hike, and at 7:30 p.m. the Christmas programme will close officially with a minstrel show, "Belles of Blackville," to be given by twenty one girls at the school. Visitors will be welcomed at all of the entertainments, Miss Merwin said.

Louisville Courier Journal January 1922

Blind Children, In Minstrel Role, Drive Off Cares of Legislators Twenty Sightless Girls From Louisville School Joke and Sing In Capital Hall While Assemblymen Cheer Them.

The Courier-Journal Frankfort Bureau

Frankfort, Ky., Jan. 18.—Members of the 1922 General Assembly, laying aside work, today learned, many of them for the first time, that what is being done by one of Kentucky's most important institutions; the Kentucky School for the Blind in Louisville. The Representatives and Senators witnessed a minstrel show presented by students of the school and saw how the State's sightless youth is trained. The jokes and songs of the twenty-odd blind girls, costumed as blackface entertainers, brought forth peals of laughter and outbursts of applause. After the entertainment many of the State's lawmakers confessed their previous ignorance of the school and declared they intended to help provide for it in the future. One of the most appreciated parts of the programme was a song and jig led by Misses Regina and Mary Ida Lafollette, sisters and Miss Stacia Rob. Before the

regular entertainment Miss Susan B. Merwin, superintendent of the school, told of the training methods of the institution and three students gave demonstrations. Cecil Belcher, 8 years old, read a fairy story from a raised page; Willie Herbert Bushing, with a raised sectional map of Kentucky, took from it any county called for, and Edward Schweer took to pieces of a manikin, explaining what he knew of the various parts and organs of the human body.

Louisville Courier-Journal, Dec. 24, 1921

SIGHTLESS TOTS STAGE PLAY FOR THEIR BLIND COMRADES
150 Children At School "Go Wild" Over "Sing a Song of Sleepy Head" and Real Theater Folk Costumes.

Devoid of sight but not of appreciation of dramatics, approximately 150 children of the Kentucky School for the Blind "went wild," Miss Susan B. Merwin, Superintendent, said, over the presentation by students of "Sing a Song of Sleepy Head" yesterday morning at the school's auditorium.

The cast was composed of nineteen children, ranging from 7 to 14 years of age, all but three of whom are blind. Of the audience, more than three-fourths are blind. The play was directed by two instructors at the school-C. B. Martin, who is blind, and Miss M. Blye Allan. Mr. Martin attributed the success attained by the performers as coming from the inspiration of being dressed in "real" costumes. .

One part of the assembly room was set so as to represent an old country home scene at Christmas, with a big, old-fashioned fireplace; an easy chair for "Sleepy Head" and a Christmas tree. The play, which began at 10 o'clock, was preceded by an entertainment including Christmas carols, recitations and songs, by some of the students. The play will be repeated after Christmas, so that Louisvillians will have the opportunity of seeing it.

The cast is: "Scribe," Mary Josephine Jackson; "Sleepy Head," Ballard Sizemore; "Sandman," Shelley Hair; "Miss Questionmark," Elizabeth Schweers; "Captain Kidd," Billie Dunn; "Bluebeard," Marshall Parks; "Old Woman in the Shoe." Lula May Wash; -Margery Daw," Amy Fugate: "Miss Muffet," Bessie Noble; "Jack Horner," Cecil Belcher; "Orphan Annie," Daisy Wallace; "Baby 'Bunting," Helen Wallace; "Little Boy Blue," Charles Tracy; "Santa Claus," Willard Slone, "Mother of Sleepy Head," Dora Schweers; "Topsy," Lida May Huffman; "Torn Tucker," Seborn Wilhoit; "Cinderella," Valera Farmer, and "Piper's Tom." Richard Fraim.

Louisville Free Public Library Reference Department

Louisville Herald April 14,1922

BLIND SCHOOL WORK PRAISED
Henry James Offers Plan To Raise Enrollment Of Institution.

{Special to The Herald)

FRANKFORT, KY., April 13.—, With less than fifty per cent of the blind children of the state being educated, State Inspector and Examiner Henry

H. James, in a report on the Kentucky School for the Blind, Louisville, which was filed today with Governor Morrow, urges that an effort be made to increase the population of the school.

"There are many blind children," he said, between the teachable ages of six and sixteen that are growing up in ignorance without any share of the great advantages so freely offered by the state at this school."

Inspector James is also of the opinion that there are parents of a great many blind children who do not know that they have the privilege of sending their children to the school, and in view of this he recommends the employment of a suitable person to go into the field and seek out and bring to the school every deserving child, both white and colored.

Education Is Free.

In this connection he said:

“To withhold from a child such opportunities to secure an education as is provided at this school is a serious mistake. We are told that if a child is destitute it will not only be given its board and tuition free, but that railroad fare and clothing will be furnished if a certificate is received from the county judge of its county, stating that its people are not financially able to pay for these items. Under these conditions there is no excuse for any blind child in Kentucky not receiving an education."

The annual state appropriation for the School for the Blind is $51,500, of which $45,000 is allotted to the white department and $6,500 to the colored department. The state also makes an annual appropriation of $14,000 to the Kentucky Work Shop for Adult Blind, and the recent session of the General Assembly made an appropriation of $25,000 for the purpose of enlarging the government printing plant, located on the grounds of the school. The plant, Inspector James said, is the largest printing plant for the blind in the United States, and its output is sent to every state in the Union.

To Repair Buildings.

The total receipts of the workshop for the years 1920 and 1921, including the state appropriation, amounted to $88,555.36, with expenditures amounting to $79,606.79, leaving a balance of $6,948.57 on hand the first of March this year. In addition to the balance the school has government bonds and certificates amounting to $15,000, and it is the intention of those in charge to use a part of the money on hand to repair the buildings of the workshop and to equip the plant in order that more blind persons can be given employment there.

At the time of the investigation there were 103 white and sixteen colored children in the school, the per capita for the year ending June 30, 1921, being $429.16.

Discussing the activities of the workshop, Inspector James showed that the proceeds from the sale of mops and brooms made by the blind for the years 1920 and 1921 amounted to $32,201.59

Insurance amounting to $181,300 is carried on the buildings and contents. Of the total amount $161,700 is carried on the Kentucky School for the Blind and $19,600 on the workshop for adult blind.

Miss Merwin Praised.
"Miss Susan Merwin, the superintendents and her assistants," Inspector James said, "are giving their best efforts to the school and seem to be greatly attached to the pupils and do everything in their power to make them happy, as well as contented."
The investigation revealed no evidence of extravagance in the management of the school, but, on the contrary, Inspector James said, "the persons in charge have used good judgment in their purchase of supplies for the school."

Louisville Herald July 30, 1922
NEW BLIND SHOP TO OPEN TUESDAY
A. retail department and store will be opened by the Kentucky Workshop for the Adult Blind Tuesday at Frankfort and Bellaire Avenue. This property, which has recently been acquired by the workshop, has been greatly improved and plans are being made for still more extensive improvements. The high-grade brooms and mops, made by blind men who are taught and employed in this workshop are well known to many Louisville housekeepers but the many beautiful and useful articles made by the women of the state are a new feature of this retail department. Here may be found hand woven rugs in a great variety of colors and sizes —neatly made gingham and percale aprons practical styles--hand hemmed dish and glass towels—attractive wash cloths with crocheted edges and exquisite tatting in simple and most intricate patterns. Special orders will be filled' promptly for any quantity or kind of tatting made by the nimble find skillful fingers of blind women. Here also are displayed reed baskets and tea trays which make attractive and useful gifts. The sole purpose or this store is to give employment to Blind men and women in the State of Kentucky. The Kentucky Workshop for the Adult Blind is a department. of the Kentucky School for the Blind and under the same management but is operated solely for the benefit of the adult blind.

Louisville Free Public library Reference Department

Courier-Journal Mar 10, 1923
SONGS that brought laughter or tears many years ago were sung last night at a minstrel given by children of the Kentucky School for the Blind. Living pictures of "the old family album" were shown. One of them, "Twins,' is pictured below.

Top, left to right: Misses J. Follette, R. Richie. R. LaFollette, .A. Kelly, M. J. Jackson, H. Parker, P. Fraim, H. Hall, V. Farmer. F. B. Vincent (interlocuter), N. Hatton, I. Bullock, L. Haddox, 0. Robb, D. Wallace. A. Fugate, L. M. Huffman, F. Schweers and S. Robb. Bottom: Misses Dorothy Morrow and Helen Wallace, 7-year-old twins, youngest members of the minstrels. in "Pages From the Old Family Album."

PLANTATION melodies tingling with the romance of the Southland and a fairy playlet surpassing the dreams of Cinderella featured the show given last night by girls at the Kentucky School for the Blind. The minstrels, starring- Misses I. and R. La Follette as two blackface comedians, was a constant series of laughs, jokes, songs and monologues and on the sightless eyes of the twenty girls of the chorus there was a real happiness, which their smiles alone could bespeak.

A one-act playlet, "Elsie's Dream," starred Miss R. Richie as Elsie, a servant, who awaiting the return of her mistress, dreams she • is a queen and is entertainment in regal style by the Six Roses and four Rose-buds, in a programme of songs and recitations.

The only unpleasant theme of the show was the rude awakening of Elsie to find herself again in the work-a-day atmosphere from which she entered the kingdom of dreams.

Produced under the direction of the faculty of the school, the show represented hours spent in memorizing the musical scores and hues, and staged with professional talent it displayed the facilities of the; school.

Courier-Journal, April 13, 1923

BLIND PUPILS SING CHINESE SONGS

Ancient Poem By Chang Wen Chang on Programme.

Chinese and Japanese music and recitations, some of them dating back almost a thousand years before the Christian era, will make up a programme to be rendered tonight by pupils of the Kentucky School for the Blind, at the auditorium, 1867 Frankfort Avenue, under the direction of C. B. Martin. The opening number is a song, "The Old Temple Among the Mountains" arranged by Charles T, Griffes. This poem, the programme states, was written by Chang Wen Chang between the Ninth and Sixth Centuries, B. C.

Louisville Herald, April 13, 1923

MUSIC RECITATIONS ON BLIND SCHOOL PROGRAM TONIGHT

Pupils of the Kentucky School for the Blind will give the following program of music and recitations from China and Japan at 8 o'clock tonight at the school auditorium:

Song—"The Old Temple Among the Mountains." (Arranged by Charles T. Griffes, Op. 10, No. 3. This poem was written by Chang Wen Chang between the Ninth and Sixth centuries B. C. Music taken from the ancient five-tone scale, the second and seventh omitted.)

Recitation—"The Old Woman and the Tiger." (Abridged and adapted from Giles' "Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio.") Alice Kelly.

Song—"Drinking Before the Peonies" (by Dirk Foch).

Recitation — "The Flower Fairies," (Abridged and adapted from Balfour's Chinese Scrapbook.) Mary Josephine Jackson.

Song—“On the Day When Death Will Knock at the Door." (Arranged by John Alden Carpenter.)
Piano Solo —"The Chinaman" (by Maria Paldi). Willie H. Bushong.
Song——“Tears." (Arranged by Charles T. Griffes, Op. 10,, No. 4. Poem was written by Wang Sen-Ju during the Sixth Century. Music is arranged from the sixth tone scale with one foreign tone, the seventh, omitted.
Recitation—How Goes the Night?" (A gathering of the clans In the Ninth Century before Christ.) Iris Bullock.
Song—"The Return" (by Dirk Foch).
Piano Solo-- "Chinese Music Box" (by Platon Brounoff). Marshall Parks
Song—Japanese group: (a) "Landscape.” (Arranged by Charles T. Griffes, Op, 10, No. 2. Poem written by Sada -lhe about the Thirteenth Century. Music taken from the five-tone scale, the fourth and seventh omitted.) (b) "Cherry Bloom." (To be sung in Japanese. Edited and arranged by Granville Bantock.) (c) "New Year Song." (Edited and arranged by Granville Bantock.)
Recitation—“Chinese Proverbs."
Song--"Alone.” (byDick Foch).
Recitation—“Which was the Dream?" (Abridged and adapted from Balfour’s Chinese Scrapbook.) Fairy Belle Vincent.
Song—“The Sleep That Flits on Baby’s Eyes.” (Arranged by John Alden Carpenter.)
Piano Solo—“Chinese Lantern Dance.” (by Platon Brounoff.) Billie Dunn
Song—“So-fei Gathering Flowers.” (By Charles T. Griffes. Poem by Wanf-Chang Ling. Written about 750 A.D. and arranged from the five-tone scale, the fourth and seventh omitted.)
Recitation—“A Moral Lesson.” (From an ancient Chinese “She-King” or “Book of Odes.” Pinkie Fraim.
Song—“Jasmine Flower.” (Translated by H.F.B. Edited and arranged by Granville Bantock.)

Louisville Free Public Library Reference Department
Courier-Journal, June 3, 1923
TO HELP BLIND CHILDREN.
A contribution was made to the Susan B. Merwin Fund, according to announcement by the Louisville Section, Council of Jewish Women. This fund has for its object follow-up work among blind children.

Louisville Herald, June 6, 1923
C B MARTIN NEW HEAD OF SCHOOL FOR BLIND
Clifford B. Martin, for thirty-eight years connected with the Kentucky School for the Blind and for the last three years its assistant superintendent, was elected superintendent by the board of visitors at noon yesterday. He succeeds Miss Susan B. Merwin, superintendent for eleven years until her death on May 6. Miss Catherine Moriarity was named assistant superintendent.

Courier-Journal, November 18, 1923

Blind Pupils Good Writers.

In a recent composition writing contest on a given subject, conducted at the Kentucky School for the Blind in Louisville, over half a hundred were submitted by the sightless pupils. Though unable to see, the essays stressed the wonderful descriptive powers of the writers, many of whom had been bereft of sight since birth. Exhibiting a wealth and minuteness of detail the sightless pupils portrayed scents they had never beheld. In powers of description it was the same whether it was a grinning jack-o'-lantern or a forest with grassy slope and purling brooks.

Depicting the beauties of a sunset would appear incredible from a child that had never known one color from another or had the slightest ocular conception of a tint or shade. Harmony is the outstanding note of the blind in their impressions of color. The little blind girl insisted upon having a doll with eyes of a certain color and hair of a designated shade that might he overlooked by another that could detect the difference. Though rated a laggard in ordinary education, Kentucky is in the front rank of the states when it comes to the education of the blind. Not only does the Kentucky School rank among the foremost in efficiency but t he per capita cost of lower than all others save one. It is one State institution about which many people seem to know little and others have a very hazy idea of its scope and benefits. A visit to the Kentucky School for the Blind would be a revelation to most people.

Courier-Journal November 27, 1923

PRINTING HOUSE FOR BLIND HAS HEAD

Dr. E. E. Bramlette of Texas, formerly superintendent of the State School for the Blind at Austin, has officially taken over the superintendency of the American Printing House for the Blind, to which position he was appointed November 1. Dr. Bramlette has had charge of the Texas institution for the past fifteen years and has served in the United States Consular Service

Louisville Times, November 28, 1923

New Blind Printery Head

Dr. E.E. Bramlette, formerly superintendent of the State School for the Blind at Austin, Texas, has begun his duties as superintendent of the American Printing House for the Blind here, succeeding the late Miss Susan B. Merwin. who also was superintendent of the Kentucky School for the Blind. He will have charge of providing means for enlightening the blind of the nation, particularly as to embossed books and literature.

Dr. Bramlette had charge of the blind in Texas for fifteen years and has served in the United States Consular Service.

The Printing House was established in 1858 and was supported by individual subscription and by the State until 1879, when an annual

appropriation of $10,000 was made by Congress. In 1919, this appropriation was increased to $50,000 a year, through efforts of the late Miss Merwin. The money was used in the manufacture of embossed hooks which are divided among the various school for the blind in the country. Last year, the State Legislature appropriated $25,000 for an annex to the old building, which had become too small to accommodate the greatly increased. force and stock to meet demands of the 645 schools to which books are being furnished. The first embossed books printed in this country for the use of the blind were in ordinary raised letters like ink print, called the "line letter," Dr. Bramlette said. This type is now seldom read, as it could be read but not written and that dots could be felt more easily than the raised letters and the New York point and American Braille, two-dot systems were introduced instead of the old ''line letter." In 1918, it was decided that a uniform type should he adopted which was called "Revised Braille."

The entire alphabet is based on six dots—two across and three deep, placed in various positions.

Courier-Journal, July 2, 1923

BLIND SCHOOLS' HEADS TO MEET

National Convention of Superintendents in Session This Morning

Superintendents of schools for the blind from all parts of the country will hold their annual meeting here today at the American Printing House for the blind.

The executive board of the Louisville School for the Blind will hold a meeting in connection with that of the superintendents and at the meeting a successor for Miss Susan B. Merwin, superintendent and secretary of the school, who died May 6, will be appointed.

The visiting superintendents will be given a dinner at the school at noon today. At 3 o'clock the regular business session will be held. John W. Barr, Jr., president of the executive board of the school will entertain members of the board and the visiting superintendents with a dinner at 7 o'clock tonight at the Pendennis Club.

At the last meeting of the Legislature $25,000 was appropriated for the building of an addition to the printing house of the school. This addition will be opened formally today.

Members of the executive board which will meet today are: John W. Barr, Jr.; Helm Bruce, Prof. Reuben B. Halleck, Lewis R. Atwood, K.C. Ballard Thruston, Clifford Rodes, and Maj. John B. Pirtle.

Louisville Herald, July 3, 1923

FAIL TO ELECT BLIND SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

Trustees of the Kentucky School for the Blind held their regular meeting at the institution on Frankfort Avenue yesterday afternoon but failed to elect a superintendent to succeed Miss Susan B. Merwin, who died several months

ago, as head of the American Printing House for the Blind, as was anticipated.
A meeting of superintendents of the various departments was held at 11 o'clock yesterday morning preliminary to the trustees' meeting at 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon. John W. Barr, Jr., president, announced last night that no selection for the vacancy had been made but that an appointment would be made in the near future.
Local trustees who were present at yesterday's meeting were: Mr. Barr, H.C. Rodes, Helm Bruce, Capt. Alfred Pirtle, Reuben Post Halleck, Lewis R. Atwood and R.C. Ballard Thruston. Among the superintendts of various blind schools throughout the country who were present yesterday were: E.E. Bramlette, Texas State School for the Blind; G.F. Oliphant, Georgia Academy for Blind; John F. Bledsoe, Maryland School for Blind; B.S. Joice, West Pennsylvania School for Blind; George S. Wilson, Indiana School for Blind; J.F. Lumb, Ohio School for Blind; Edward M. Van Cleve, New York City Blind School; I.S. Wempler, Tennessee School for Blind, and I.W. Woolston, Illinois School for Blind.

Fight Develops In Selection of Head For American Printing House For the Blind
Louisville Board Battles Over Choice
Friction developed at the annual meeting of directors of the American Printing House for the Blind at the printshop, 1867 Frankfort Avenue, yesterday afternoon.
The struggle, which lay between the Louisville Executive Committee and superintendents and principles of blind schools throughout the country, who make up the remainder of the controlling board, swung on the appointment of a head for the printing house to succeed the late Miss Susan B. Merwin. After deciding amicably to separate the superintendence of the printshop from that of the Kentucky School for the Blind, both of which posts were held by Miss Merwin, the assembly plunged into a politely tempestuous discussion which held out for the remaining three hours of the afternoon.
Debate between the two factions resulted in a compromise committee of two Louisville and three nonresident members: John W. Barr, Jr., president of the board, and Helm Bruce for the Louisville element; Edward M. Van Cleve, New York; O.H. Burritt, Pennsylvania, and George S. Wilson, Indiana, for the superintendents. They will meet as soon as possible and decide either on the superintendents' nominee, E.E. Bramlette of Texas, or wait until next year.
Minutes of last year's meeting, re-election of Mr. Barr as president, Mr. Van Cleve as vice president, and the Citizens Union National Bank as treasurer, and hearing of special reports were in the nature of swabbing down the decks for real combat. This began with an agreement, fought vigorously by Prof. R.P. Halleck, to place the maximum salary for the position at $5,000. Friction followed as the out-of-town delegates, more numerous by three to one, urged selection of their candidate.

One point which brought equanimity was the separation of the superintendence of the printing house and the School for the Blind. The school at present is in charge of Acting Superintendent C.B. Martin; the print shop is in charge of Miss Rosanna McCann.

Mr. Bramlette's qualifications were based upon the fact that he has been superintendent of the Texas school for twelve years, during which time he has obtained a $1,000,000 appropriation for a new building, that he has held a consular position in Germany, has held a doctor's degree from a German university, and has taught in the University of Texas.

The session met at luncheon yesterday at the School for the blind and closed with a dinner at the Pendennis Club at night.

Members of the board who were present were Mr. Barr, Mr. Bruce, Professor Halleck, H.C. Rodes, and Cap. Alfred Pirtle. Superintendents and principals present were Miss Helen J. Coffin, Department for the Blind, Cleveland Public Schools; Gordon Hicks, Connecticut School for the blind; G.F. Oliphant, Georgia Academy for the Blind; George S. Wilson, Indiana School for the Blind; Frances Eber Palmer, Iowa College for the Blind; T.E. Chandler, Kansas School for the Blind; Mr. Martin, Kentucky School for the Blind; A.J. Caldwell, Louisiana State School for the Blind; John F. Bledsoe, Maryland School for the Blind; Mr. Van Cleve, New York Institute for the Education of the Blind; J.F. Lumb, Ohio State School for the Blind; O.H. Burritt, Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind; I.S. Wampler, Tennessee School for the bLind; Mr. Bramlette, Texas State School for the Blind; H.M. McManaway, Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind; B.S. Joice, Western Pennsylvania Institution for the Blind; J.T. Hooper, Wisconsin School for the Blind.

The American Printing House for the Blind, which is located in Louisville, supplies the sixty-three blind schools in the United States with books and music in the Braille system designed for blind readers. It is supported by an annual federal appropriation of $50,000, by means of which it supplies textbooks free of charge. It is the only publishing house of its kind in the United States with the exception of a few plants operated privately in connection with schools.

{photo caption] Standing, left side—H. C. Bodes, front, and George S. Wilson, back. Standing, right side—Edward M. Van Cleve of New York, front, and John W. Barr, Jr., back. Top row, kit to right—Standing on steps, T.E. Chandler of Kansas City, Kansas; J. T. Hooper, Janesville Wis.: F. E. Palmer, Winton, Iowa; John F. Bledsoe, Baltimore, Md.; H. M. McManaway, Staunton, Va., and Helm Bruce.

Middle row, left to right—B. S. Joice, Pittsburgh, Penn.; Gordon Hicks, Hartford, Conn.; Miss Helen Coffin , Cleveland. Ohio; E.E. Bramlette, Austin, Texas, and O.H. Burritt. Philadelphia, Penn.

Bottom row, left to right—C. B. Martin, Prof. R.P. Halleck, I. S. Wampler. Nashville, Tenn.; G. F. Oliphant, Macon, Ga.; A.J. Caldwell, Baton Rouge, La., and Capt. Alfred Pirtle.

Louisville Herald-Post August 31, 1924

WHAT KENTUCKY IS AND IS NOT DOING FOR THE BLIND

Written by RALPH COGHLAN

After Special Investigation for the Sunday Herald-Post.

IF YOU are a Kentuckian, you will be pleased to know what the state has done for the blind and the deaf. In the care and education of both these classes of unfortunates, Kentucky was a pioneer, lighting the path for other states to follow. Kentucky will certainly perpetuate this noble and lofty tradition. As for the tubercular, the facts are reversed. But Kentuckians will want to read, too, how they may begin to rid the state of the terrible scourge of the white plague. It can and must be done.

The Blind.

One of the best things about Kentucky, is that it has always been generous to its blind children. It has neglected and still does neglect others of its wards, but to the blind it has been open-handed and kindly. So, we may trust, it will continue.

Louisville has the honor of being the site for the Kentucky School for the Blind. On Frankfort avenue, in one of the most densely populated sections of the city, twenty-five acres of wooded land is set aside for those who cannot see. It is ironical that the most beautiful of the state institutions is never beheld by those it was founded to save.

Under the roof of the main building the classic lines of whose Greek portico may be seen thru grounds which have been planted one of every species of tree known to Kentucky, from ninety to 110 blind children live nine months out of the year.

Here they are given the same scholastic training that is received by children in public grade and high schools, yet infinitely more care and attention must be given them than to ordinary children. Most of those who grope their way for the first time up the broad staircase of the school are pitifully ignorant. They come from families in straitened circumstances, families unable to give the slightest advantages of training to their luckless child.

The Blind Child.

Frequently both mother and father are required to work. The sightless child is put in a chimney corner and warned not to move. The sounds and feel of a little house, the limited circumference of a yard or garden constitutes the whole of the child's world. The parents, hard put to earn enough for clothes and food and shelter, haven't the time or ability to train a blind child to take his place in. the great world, independent and self-supporting. They coddle and pet him and are deeply concerned over his safety, but that's about all.

One of the finest caprices of the human imagination is to invest the symbols of justice and love with sightlessness. Two of the noblest aspirations of the human heart, whose perfection is never to be attained in this world, pursue their way without the distracting aid of sight. One thinks, the other feels; each is able to benefit humanity unseeingly.

We are sorry for the blind. It is hard to think without compassion of t hose who have never seen a sunset, or a landscape, or the sea, or the human face, or any living thing. Yet if we have granted justice and love the ability to pursue their all-important functions unseeingly, it may be imagined that the real blind are also able to lead full and happy lives, lives which are often fuller and happier than those who are not handicapped by nature.

A Happy Temperament.

And this is true. Clifford B. Martin, himself deprived of the use of his eyes since he was 17 years old, is superintendent of the Kentucky school. We asked him if blindness, especially blindness acquired since birth, did not sour the individual, make him envious, morose. He replied that quite the opposite is the case. The blind person nearly always has a happy, lovable temperament. At the school, where these unfortunates are grouped, there is always an atmosphere of gaiety. They pursue their studies and play their games with deep enthusiasm. They joke about their affliction, tell stories of laughable situations created by the inability to see, and reserve their feelings of contempt largely for those blind persons who do not try to make the most of their possibilities. If one is practicing on a guitar or a banjo or a violin, others laughingly accuse him of getting ready "for the street corner" to seek alms, that occupation being to most of them inexcusable.

When one considers the tremendous obstacles in the way of every blind person, the fact that they are usually happy is the more surprising. Things which a seeing child can learn in a trice, these poor creatures must struggle to get. The seeing child looks at a map of Kentucky, studies it, and carries with him forever after a mental picture of it. These children have to run their fingers over a specially raised device, and by dint of great effort manage to obtain an idea of the state's shape, the location and relative position of its counties and cities, the course of its rivers, the routes of its railroads. They read laboriously with their fingers on raised type, while other children take in whole sentences with one glance of the eye. They must grope and feel their way from classroom to classroom, to dormitories, to playground, risking their necks at every step. Yet with all this they are happy and kind and considerate and even joyous! Indeed the example of the blind is one of the most inspiring things in life.

Not A Charity.

The state's blind school is not an asylum or a hospital for the treatment of defective eyes. The laws provide that every child of sound mind shall receive an education, and this is the place especially provided for sightless children, particularly adapted to their needs, where they receive the same training that seeing children receive in the public schools. It should not be considered a charity, any more than the public schools are. The main difference between the two is that the blind school boards and shelters its pupils while the public schools do not. But this is essential. Most of the blind pupils come from distant places in the state and are either so young or so helpless that it would be criminal not to guard them after school hours.

Even Louisville children are kept from Monday to Friday to save the trouble and danger of having them go and return thru the traffic filled streets every day.

Kentucky's blind school was founded nearly a hundred years ago, in 1842, and the magnificent old building which still houses it was built about ten years later. It is a fine example of the generous and sturdy architecture of the Nineteenth Century, stately without, elegant within and, except in certain minor respects which will be mentioned hereafter, is quite adequate for the school.

To turn from a study of the state's laxity in dealing with the problem of tuberculosis to its facilities for the education of the blind is most interesting. In the one case, hundreds are clamoring in vain for a place to rid themselves of a terrible disease. In the other, blind children have to be urged to accept the hospitality of the state and the opportunity to make themselves self-supporting.

Can Take 150.

Right now the blind school can accommodate 150 pupils and boarders, while the average attendance runs only from ninety to 110. From forty to sixty places annually remain vacant when they could be the means of bringing great happiness into the lives of that many blind children. It is estimated that there are in the state of Kentucky about 500 blind children eligible to admission. In order to fill the school, it is actually necessary to employ a field worker who roams over the state in search of blind persons who, in most cases, are desperately in need of the training and the care that is awaiting them in the blind school.

In addition to the efforts of the field workers, the state resorts to advertising to entice the blind to take advantage of its school. "In line with other progressive states," reads one of the circulars which is printed and spread broadcast, "Kentucky is doing its part for the educational and industrial improvement of its sightless children, and maintains at public expense the Kentucky School for the blind at Louisville, which ranks among the best of such institutions in the country and Is recognized the World over for the high standard it has sustained for over three-quarters of a century of its existence, it being a pioneer in the work of educating the blind.

"Strange as It may appear, although the state has provided so liberally for their education without cost in an institution of such excellence, conducted by an efficient corps of , teachers and equipped with every appliance for the work, a problem that has always been confronted has been the fact that only about half of the blind children in Kentucky are taking advantage of the great opportunity afforded them to receive a splendid education and become self-sustaining. It is to meet these conditions, that the press and public are urged to co-operate in a movement to bring into the school for the coming session the full quota of blind children.

Any child from 6 years of age to 18 is admitted, provided. of course, it possesses no contagious disease. Trachoma cases come under this classification, separate institutions being set aside for their care.

What has been said of white blind children is also true of colored ones. On the same grounds is a separate school building where colored children receive the same training as the whites. Each has the same curriculum and is presided over by the same superintendent. Each has its orchestra, its band and its choirs. The colored school, like the white, is adequate to care for the problem it was founded to handle.

Only Four Superintendents.

Since the time the blind school was founded, it has had but four superintendents, Bryce M. Patton, B. B. Huntoon, the beloved Susan B. Merwin, of recent memory, and the present head, Clifford B. Martin.

Mr. Huntoon is celebrated throughout the world for his invaluable contribution to the education of the blind, namely the invention of the New York point system of reading., and writing. Upon its invention, this system was almost immediately adopted by every blind educator in the country. Prior to that time books for the blind had been printed in the line system of raised letters. This system was difficult to master because it required a marked delicacy of touch to read rapidly ordinary English letters which had been raised. Mr. Huntoon, aided by W.B. Wait, of New York, who invented the machine by which Mr. Huntoon's system could be put into operation, revolutionized the education of the blind by formulating an alphabet of raised dots. The dot system, which followed the same principle as the Morse code, rendered reading and writing infinitely easier. Up until four years ago the New York point was almost universally used, it has now been superseded by an eclectic point system, known as revised Braille.

It was the efforts of the present superintendent, Mr. Martin, that resulted in the Kentucky Workshop for the Adult Blind, located at 2001 Frankfort Avenue, where blind persons too old to enter the school are taught not only to read and write but to make mops and brooms. Thru the training they get there they are enabled to make a living by their own Industry. The Kentucky Workshop turns out twelve dozen brooms daily and eight dozen mops. These are of superior workmanship and are sold as fast as they are made. Blind adult women, thru the Kentucky Workshop, which furnishes the materials and the inspiration, are helped to make a livelihood with their needles by hemming towels and making aprons which are sold by the workshop. Mr. Martin, who himself is an example of what the blind can do once they set their minds to it, claims that thru the school and the workshop, Kentucky is equipped to care for every blind person, child or adult, in the state. Not long ago four blind men, three colored and one white, were taken out of the poorhouse, where they were a drag on society and a burden to themselves, and taught how to become self-sustaining. Another blind man, from the mountain section of Kentucky, despondent because of his helplessness, was trained there. He returned to his native town and established a mop and broom business so large that he was forced to employ four assistants, men who could see.

Another blind man from the Bluegrass, after being trained here, returned home and is now supporting not only himself but his aged father and

mother and an invalid sister. Any number of such instances can be recounted by Mr. Martin.

Excellent In Athletics.

In the reception room of the Kentucky School for the Blind, hung with the portraits of those who have been closely identified with it, may be seen quite a number of cups which have been won by the blind boys In athletic contests in competition with boys who can see. Despite their handicaps, the blind excel in certain forms of athletics. Rope-climbing, broad jumps, sack races, shot-put, 50 and 75-yard dashes and the medicine ball are some of the events in which the blind are very formidable. Indeed, this is one part of their training which given them their greatest joy. At present the hall used by them as a gymnasium is also used as a chapel and an auditorium. It is located In the heart of the main building and is not only poorly equipped for gymnasium purposes, but the presence of a running, jumping class there makes it almost impossible for classes to be held nearby. The floor shakes, with the impact of many feet and the noisy din is heard thru the walls.

This room is also unfit for use as an auditorium. It is too small, and must be filled when dramatic performances or general assemblies are held, with chairs carried from all parts of the building. One of the most important features of training the blind is the use of amateur theatricals, for the self-confidence and presence it lends, and for its value in the fluent and correct use of English. The dramatic performances of the blind are popular and are very largely attended. It is often necessary to give two or three performances of the same piece in this small hall so that all who desire may see it.

A plan nearest the heart of those who conduct the school is to build a separate building whose basement will contain a swimming pool, the first floor a gymnasium, the second floor an auditorium.

Not Luxuries.

Handicraft training, carpentry and the like, is vitally important, and a separate building for all industrial purposes is badly needed. At present all this work that it is possible to give takes place in the main building, or in the manual training room over the stable, a room which has been there for fifty years and is entirely too antiquated for the purpose. There is also needed two cottages where the very young children may be kept separate from the older ones and where they can more easily be given separate training. .Thus the needs of the school may be summarized:

First—A new building containing gymnasium, auditorium and swimming pool.

Second—An industrial building.

Third—Two cottages for the little blind tots. The state is not accustomed to niggardliness in its treatment of the blind. It has never deprived them of anything which is essential to their proper development. The things which are asked here are not luxuries. They are things which an institution of this kind should have. They are the things-which keep the Kentucky School for

the Blind from reaching the highest possible standing for an institution of its kind.
Now as to the deaf…